

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Rep. Darrell Issa, R-Calif, officially introduced H.R. 3782, the Online Protection & Enforcement of Digital Trade Act in the U.S. House of Representatives. This bill delivers stronger intellectual property rights for American artists and innovators while protecting the open, accessible Internet Americans deserve. This bipartisan, bicameral bill protects American artists and innovators through the International Trade Commission (ITC), by applying due process to investigate intellectual property infringement claims against foreign "rogue" websites and cuts off funding to sites found to be willfully and primarily trafficking infringed material. Senator Ron Wyden, D-Ore., has introduced the OPEN Act in the U.S. Senate.

"OPEN is a targeted, effective solution to the problem of foreign, rogue websites stealing from American artists and innovators," said Issa. "Today's Internet blackout has underscored the flawed approach taken by SOPA and PIPA to the real problem of intellectual property infringement. OPEN is a smarter way to protect taxpayers' rights while protecting the Internet."

Issa and Wyden released the draft OPEN Act at www.KeepTheWebOpen.com last year, using the Madison platform to open up the legislative process to taxpayers for the first time. Since then, OPEN has received more than 150 substantive comments and crowdsourced suggested improvements, many of which were included in the formal bill introduction. To date, nearly 300,000 Americans have visited the website.

The legislation is supported by original cosponsors Rep. Spencer Bachus (R-AL), **Rep. John Campbell (R-CA)**

, Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-UT), Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR), Rep. Lloyd Doggett (D-TX), Rep. Mike Doyle (D-PA), Rep. Keith Ellison (D-MN), Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-CA), Rep. Blake Farenthold (R-TX), Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ), Rep. Mike Honda (D-CA), Rep. Tim Johnson (R-IL), Rep. Jim Langevin (D-RI), Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA), Rep. Doris Matsui (D-CA), Rep. Patrick McHenry (R-NC), Rep. George Miller (D-CA), Rep. Jared Polis (D-CO), Rep. Dennis Ross (R-FL), Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI), Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA), Rep. Pete Stark (D-CA), Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA), and Rep. Lynn Woolsey (D-CA).

Upon the introduction of the OPEN Act, these original cosponsors offered the following statements:

Rep. Spencer Bachus

"The Government should not be in the business of censoring speech. The Federal Government has no right to censor the Internet."

Rep. John Campbell

"I strongly support the OPEN Act, as it is legislation that will effectively crack down on rogue, foreign websites and protect American consumers, while protecting and preserving the innovative and job-creating engine that is the Internet."

Rep. Jason Chaffetz

"SOPA threatens our cyber security, undermines freedom of speech, and chills innovation in one of the few sectors of our economy that is actually working. While I understand and appreciate the need to protect intellectual property, SOPA is a massive and inappropriate overreach. Instead, I strongly support the OPEN Act. This bi-partisan legislation addresses the problem of online piracy without causing collateral damage to the Internet as SOPA would."

Rep. Peter DeFazio

"As written, SOPA and PIPA would jeopardize online freedom and grant corporations and the federal government unprecedented power to censor the Internet. I support the OPEN Act because it targets the people breaking the law without threatening the freedom of every other Internet user."

Rep. Lloyd Doggett

"The threat to an open Internet posed by Rep. Lamar Smith's SOPA cannot be cleaned up with soap and a wire brush. It should be rejected in favor of a more focused alternative, like the OPEN Act, which addresses legitimate piracy concerns without mandating censorship or blocking websites."

Rep. Anna Eshoo

"Rogue websites and the pirates behind them represent the hijacking of American genius, and must be stopped. But the Stop Online Piracy Act's (SOPA) overly broad language will seriously hinder the growth of new businesses, new investments, and new jobs. The economic opportunities and innovation created by the Internet and start-ups could be crushed under the weight of SOPA. Today's introduction of the OPEN Act provides us with a framework on how to best protect U.S. intellectual property rights, and I'm proud to support it."

Rep. Blake Farenthold

"An open internet is a marketplace for ideas that encourages innovation and economic growth. A free and open Internet gives everyone an audience for the free flow of ideas, it is the soap box of the 21st Century for political discourse exemplifying the American value of free speech. Social media is a gateway to friends and loved ones and puts new business opportunities at our fingertips. The internet is our newest frontier and must be free from oppressive government regulation."

Rep. Mike Honda

"Throughout the public debate for the Stop Online Piracy Act and the Protect IP Act, I have often stated that at the heart of this issue are fundamental questions about what the internet and free speech means to Americans, intellectual property rights holders, and our economy; these questions are too important to haphazardly rush through Congress without a full and open debate. No one denies that copyright infringement and piracy are serious problems. What deserves a full debate are the protections that legitimate sites should have and by what method we expose criminals while allowing lawful businesses and people, like the constituents in my District, to continue to innovate in ways that change the way we look at the world. That is why I proudly support the OPEN Act. Not only for how it is crafted, properly targeting and defining

rogue actors without putting innovation in danger, but also the way in which it was crafted: in a full open forum that has allowed for robust debate. It is my sincere hope that the introduction of this bill represents a critical turning point in this debate, where diverse groups of stakeholders come together and thoroughly work on a solution."

Rep. Tim Johnson

"It is the right of every American to be compensated and receive payment for their efforts, whether they are artists, manufacturers, or any other type of business. While the protection of intellectual property in any form is a necessary function of government, these bills do not solve the problem of privacy, do not fully address the issue, and are not supported by the American public or the majority of stake holders in this issue. Simply put, these measures add unnecessary regulators to the federal bureaucracy and in the long-run, don't solve the problem. The Open Act does."

Rep. Jim Langevin

"We must act to use existing laws and organizations along with new marketing regimes to crack down on digital pirates while fully leveraging a growing market for online content," said Langevin, co-founder of the Congressional Cybersecurity Caucus. "Instead of trying to mitigate security, economic, and Internet freedom concerns with broad, over-reaching technical solutions, I support proposals like this one that seek a middle ground for curbing online piracy while protecting American jobs and innovative technologies that have allowed us to remain the world leader online."

Rep. Zoe Lofgren

Congress doesn't have to censor the Internet or restrain innovation in order to fight online piracy. The OPEN Act shows there's a better way. It relies on proven remedies—attacking the profit motive for online infringement—without the collateral damage to the Internet that SOPA and PIPA would cause. The OPEN Act has already benefited from a novel legislative experiment, through the solicitation of public comments and revisions at keepthewebopen.com. After the bill's introduction, I look forward to hearing additional constructive feedback and ways to incorporate it as the bill moves forward.

Rep. Doris Matsui

"While combating online copyright infringement is a goal we all support, SOPA, as it is currently written, would cause substantial harm to American innovation and the economic opportunities created by the Internet ecosystem. Americans increasingly rely on the Internet in many important ways, from looking for a job to taking online education courses, accessing health care, and so forth. Moreover, small businesses and entrepreneurs rely on an open and free Internet to be able to offer services, and to grow and expand their businesses. That is why I am happy to join my colleagues today in introducing the bipartisan OPEN Act, which will ensure the Internet remains open and free to all Americans and enables our innovators to continue to keep our country competitive."

Rep. Patrick McHenry

"In a society that values creativity and innovation, it's important to protect intellectual property and prevent copyright infringement. The OPEN Act targets online piracy from rogue websites while safeguarding First Amendment rights and ensuring the American tradition of due process."

Rep. George Miller

"SOPA and PIPA are not the right answer for the future of the Internet, and that is why I oppose them. Our bipartisan bill introduced today – the OPEN Act – can achieve what SOPA would not: crack down on foreign websites that willfully violate copyright laws, without going to the dangerous extremes proposed in the other legislation."

Rep. Jared Polis

"Unlike SOPA and PIPA, the OPEN Act will effectively combat piracy from foreign websites while preserving Internet freedom. By using a 'follow-the-money' approach we can shut down

foreign sites that steal intellectual property while ensuring that the Internet remains an engine of innovation, information and job creation. Without access to capital, these foreign websites will wither and die while the Internet continues to grow and thrive."

Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner

"As an ardent defender of American intellectual property rights, I am pleased to see the OPEN Act introduced to target rogue sites without destroying Internet infrastructure or crippling legitimate innovation online. Congress must absolutely take the threat of piracy seriously, and this legislation shows we can do so without opening up the floodgates for litigation or limiting freedom of expression."

Rep. Mike Thompson

"Today, thousands of websites such as Wikipedia and WordPress have gone dark, giving us a glimpse of what it could be like if the overly broad SOPA legislation became law. SOPA would stifle innovation, resulting in fewer new businesses, fewer new investments and fewer new jobs. While online piracy is something we must continually fight, SOPA is the wrong way to do it. That is why I am working with global leaders like Google and Twitter, to instead enact the OPEN Act, which still combats piracy but does so in a way that doesn't let broad government oversight stifle the innovation and creativity that has been a driving force behind the Internet industry's economic success."

#